



REPORT TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM NO. VIA 1-2

HPC MEETING: 07/27/2009

July 27, 2009

FROM: KEITH BERGTHOLD, Interim Director
Planning and Development Department

APPROVED BY

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR

THROUGH: DARRELL UNRUH, Planning Manager 
Secretary, Historic Preservation Commission

BY: KARANA HATTERSLEY-DRAYTON
Historic Preservation Project Manager

SUBJECT: REVIEW AND MAKE FINDINGS ON RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL
WHETHER TO DESIGNATE THE FOLLOWING PROPERTIES TO FRESNO'S LOCAL
REGISTER OF HISTORIC RESOURCES: THE FRANK AND FELITA KAUKU HOME
LOCATED AT 641 E. CARMEN AVENUE AND THE DEACON-EILERT HOME LOCATED
AT 660 E. CARMEN AVENUE.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission review the attached State of California survey forms and hold a public hearing. Staff further recommends that the Commission nominate the Deacon-Eilert Home located at 660 E. Carmen Avenue to the Local Register of Historic Resources under Criteria i and ii pursuant to Section 12-1607 (a) (b) and (d) of the Fresno Municipal Code. Staff also recommends that the Commission designate the Frank and Felita Kauke Home located at 641 E. Carmen Avenue as a Heritage Property pursuant to FMC Section 12-1612. The Commission's recommendation for a nomination to the Local Register will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration as provided by the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The two properties have been publicly noticed in the *Fresno Bee* as required by the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance (published July 17, 2009).

BACKGROUND

The property owners for the **Frank and Felita Kauke Home** located at 641 E. Carmen Avenue (Council District 01) have requested that their home be evaluated and considered for inclusion on Fresno's Local Official Register of Historic Resources. This Italian Renaissance Revival style home was constructed in 1932 in the "Wilson Island" neighborhood of Wilson's North Fresno Tract for Frank Kauke a former Fresno City attorney and Fresno County District attorney, and his bride, Felita. The residence was designed by the prominent regional architect Charles E. Butner, who also designed the Physicians Building (1926) and Twining Laboratories (1930). Both of these buildings---located directly across Fresno Street from the City Hall---are on the National Register of Historic Places as well as the Local Register. Although this home is associated with a major regional architect, the property has lost some integrity to its period of significance due to a recent change out of all the façade windows. The Kauke Home does not appear to be individually eligible to the Local Register but does appear to qualify as a Heritage Property and is an important contributor to the proposed Wilson Island Historic District.

The **Deacon-Eilert Home** located at 660 E. Carmen Avenue was one of the early residences constructed in the 6-block area known emically as the "Wilson Island," a secluded neighborhood within the Tower District that was marketed to Fresno's business elite community. The Tudor-Craftsman style home was built in 1919 and is associated with two distinguished Fresno families, Roual and Mae D. Deacon and William and Mae Eilert. The Deacons were the first residents in 1920; Roual Deacon owned the Lemoore Lumber Company. The Eilert family purchased the property in 1925 and made the front page of the

Fresno Bee: "one of the biggest sales of residential property in Fresno." Local realtors considered the sale an indication that Fresno was coming out of an agricultural depression. William J. Eilert came to California from Wisconsin with his father Ernst. The Eilerts opened the Fresno Brewing Company in 1900 and William ran the company for many years after his father's death in 1902. The last building of the Fresno Brewing Company complex, located at the end of M Street, is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Deacon-Eilert Home appears to be eligible to Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources under Criterion i, as one of the first homes in the prestigious Wilson Island neighborhood, and under Criterion ii, for its association with two prominent local families, the Deacons and Eilerts.

Attachments: Exhibit A - California Department of Parks Primary and BSO forms for The Frank and Felita Kauke Home.
 Exhibit B - California Department of Parks Primary and BSO forms for the Deacon-Eilert Home.